United Nations A/65/765

General Assembly

Distr.: General
1 March 2011

Original: English

Sixty-fifth session
Agenda item 139
Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Preliminary report on the implementation of the pilot project designated by the General Assembly in resolution 63/287

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to the decision of the General Assembly, in its resolution 63/287, in which the Assembly designated, as a pilot project, from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2012, post-based budget allocations for centres of investigation in Nairobi, Vienna and New York and resident investigators in seven peacekeeping missions. In that resolution, the Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit a preliminary report on the status of implementation of the project at the second part of its resumed sixty-fifth session.

Preliminary results of the project indicate an inefficient distribution of resources, with some missions receiving nominal staffing of one to three investigators, sometimes with no support staff, while the centre in Vienna was allocated positions in seniority and number in excess of its management and operational needs. There appear, however, to be advantages in locating investigators in peacekeeping missions in terms of facilitating the reporting of wrongdoing and increasing investigator productivity. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is currently recording and analysing data to provide an improved basis for determining efficient and effective resource allocation and distribution to support operational requirements. The results will be included in a comprehensive report on the project to be submitted to the General Assembly in the context of the 2012/13 support account budget.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/287, the General Assembly decided not to introduce the structure proposed by the Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) based on the establishment of hubs (see A/63/767 and Corr.1, para. 688), but rather to establish a pilot project, from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2012, through the approved support account budget,[1] defining a post-based structure and related budget allocations and combining centres of investigation in Nairobi, Vienna and New York, including the placement of resident investigators based in seven peacekeeping missions.

II. Centres of investigation

2. The centres identified by the project were consistent with existing offices and positions of the OIOS Investigations Division funded under the regular budget. Although regular budget resources tend to provide proportionally more administrative, quality assurance and management support to all investigations, positions in these centres funded under the support account also include investigators, managers, professional support personnel and General Service staff.

Positions allocated to centres under the project

Office	*Investigators*	*Management*	*Professional support*	*General Service*
New York	3	1	3	3
Vienna	8	1	2	3
Nairobi	9	2	2	4
Total	**20**	**4**	**7**	**10**

3. While each centre has responsibility for investigation activities related to both the regular budget and the support account, under the project resources from the support account are intended to handle peacekeeping-related investigations within their geographic location and proximity.[2] Nevertheless, owing to the requirement to respond to caseload demands, investigations may not be undertaken exclusively by staff members from the corresponding centre. Case management takes into consideration the special skills, availability of resources and urgency dictated by

[1] The support account budget constitutes about 60 per cent of the operational budget of the Investigations Division.

[2] New York covers the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). Vienna covers the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFYCIP), the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). Nairobi covers the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT).

each case so that capacity surplus may be reassigned to meet demands in centres or missions with capacity shortfalls.

4. The OIOS Investigations Division, based at Headquarters in New York, provides central services for all locations, including policy development, monitoring, planning and support for governance, in addition to quality assurance and legal advice, from the Professional Practices Section, and technical support, from the Information Technology Forensic Unit.

5. To maximize the efficient utilization of resources, the Investigations Division has decentralized certain services previously provided solely by New York: all centres now have the professional capacity to support the work of both the Professional Practices Section and the Information Technology Forensic Unit.

Non-investigator professional positions allocated to the centres

	New York	*Vienna*	*Nairobi*
		Management	
Deputy Director	—	1	1
Unit Chief	1	—	1
		Professional support	
Professional Practices Section	2	1	1
Information Technology Forensic Unit	1	1	1

Some central services undertaken at Headquarters also are assigned to other locations where surplus administrative capacity may exist. The Vienna centre, for example, currently assumes responsibility for certain tasks supporting all offices.[3]

III. Resident investigators

6. Professional positions allocated to missions include only investigators, with no managerial or professional support personnel; General Service positions have been allocated to three of the seven missions with resident investigators.

[3] Vienna assumed responsibility for treasury and other clearances that require the review of staff names against the records of the OIOS Investigations Division in order to ascertain whether there is an investigation that might affect their ability to manage funds.

Resident investigator posts allocated to missions under the pilot project

Mission	*Resident investigators*	*General Service*
MINUSTAH	1	—
MONUSCO	2	1
UNOCI	1	—
UNMIL	3	1
UNMIS	3	1
UNAMID[a]	1	—
UNIFIL	1	—

[a] The General Assembly allocated funds for one resident investigator in UNMIT, however, given its status and relatively small size, OIOS redeployed the position to UNAMID together with investigators for UNMIS.

7. Given the limited allocation of positions to the missions, all resident investigators rely on support from the centres for investigations, management, operational support and administration.

IV. Operations versus support functions

8. Investigator positions represent approximately half of all allocated positions. In addition, management and the staff of the Professional Practices Section and the Technology Forensic Unit also conduct and directly support investigations. Accordingly, the resources allocated to support functions are minimized. At the same time, staff members with support and managerial roles are fully integrated into operations, allowing for the development of experience and skills responsive to operational needs. The additional capacity also serves as a resource for surge demands for investigations that exceed the immediate capacity of staff who are generally assigned investigation functions.

9. For the first fiscal year of its operation (2009/10), although $8.5 million was allocated for the project, actual expenditures amounted to $5.6 million. Vacancy levels make it difficult to determine, however, whether such savings can be wholly attributed to the actual project.

OIOS Investigations Division: costs funded through the support account for peacekeeping operations

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	Total	*Total*	*Total*	*Total*	*Total*
	2005/06	*2006/07*	*2007/08*	*2008/09*	*2009/10*
Mission staff costs	1 818	3 321	3 570	2 489	1 194
Hub staff costs	1 961	2 786	2 925	3 443	3 132
Support costs[a]	701	612	853	1 162	1 323
Total	**4 480**	**6 719**	**7 348**	**7 094**	**5 649**

[a] Support costs include consultants, travel, information technology, supplies and training.

V. Implementation

10. Implementation of the project primarily involved the appointment of staff and, to a lesser extent, the establishment of a physical presence within the missions. Since support costs provided for in the budget were limited, OIOS relied heavily on mission support for work space and other operational requirements. The OIOS Investigations Division has either established or prepared for its presence in the seven missions identified in the project.

11. When the project was established, the Investigations Division had a 47 per cent vacancy rate for positions funded under the support account budget. Balancing recruitment activities with ongoing operational and administrative needs while operating at half strength has been challenging. In addition, 28 per cent of the recruitment for the Investigations Division was from within its own ranks and, in some instances, involved recruitment from support account- to regular budget-funded positions. Nevertheless, the vacancy rate for positions funded under the support account was reduced from 47 per cent to 33 per cent in the 18 months following the establishment of the project.

12. OIOS continues to manage vacancies and prioritize recruitment, anticipating increases in post incumbency rates. However, the recruitment and retention of specialized expertise, particularly in missions, continues to present challenges.

13. Operationally, Investigations Division continues to improve both its competence and performance as part of the implementation of the project. New processes and procedures, together with enhanced collaboration among operational counterparts, have resulted in effective discharge of the investigation function despite uncertainty over the structure and limits in capacity.

14. Operations are substantially affected by the introduction of new matters for investigation. The highest number of requests for investigations related to peacekeeping occurs at missions where resident investigators are deployed. This is a function of the relatively higher risk missions to which they are assigned and the greater awareness of personnel at those missions of the investigation function. It does, however, have an impact on the capacity of the resident investigators by placing additional demands on resources to manage intake and preinvestigation activities.

15. During the first year of the project, 82 new investigations were initiated and 81 were completed at missions with resident investigators, while all other missions combined constituted only approximately 20 per cent of the total caseload at missions.

Case intake and reports issued in Missions: 1 July 2009-30 June 2010

Resident investigators			No resident investigator		
Mission	*Intake*	*Output*	*Mission*	*Intake*	*Output*
UNAMID	3	0	BINUB	2	1
MONUSCO	36	20	BONUCA	2	0
UNMIS	4	2	MINURSO	2	0
UNMIL	14	19	UNAMA	2	1
UNOCI	6	10	UNAMI	2	1
MINUSTAH	18	24	UNDOF	1	0
UNIFIL	1	6	UNFICYP	2	0
Total	82	81	UNMIK	1	4
			UNMIT	5	8
			UNMIN	0	1
			UNTSO	1	0
			Total	20	16

Abbreviations: BINUB, United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi; BONUCA, United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic; UNAMA, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

16. It should be noted that investigations are completed with support from different locations. Since MINUSTAH, UNAMID, UNOCI and UNIFIL were allocated only one investigator post each, all investigations in those locations required support from investigators in other missions or from the three centres for certain tasks requiring two investigators (for example, for witness and subject interviews). Investigations at MONUSCO, UNMIL and UNMIS also required such support, even though each was assigned more than one investigator post, due, partly, to vacancies, but also due to the absence of investigators from missions for leave or for other reasons.

17. In the mission environment, matters related to sexual exploitation and abuse continued to represent the most common category for investigation (41 per cent), although the number of such investigations has been substantially reduced since the peak in 2006. Investigations of this nature usually involve the personnel of the troop-contributing country, while other types of investigations often implicate United Nations personnel.

18. Investigations involving troop-contributing country personnel are also subject to the revised model memorandum of understanding,[4] which provides options for the investigation by either the troop-contributing country, the Investigations Division (should the troop-contributing country decline to investigate) or a joint investigation by the troop-contributing country and the Investigations Division.

[4] A/61/19 (Part III).

VI. Preliminary assessment

19. The allocation of resources under the project does not fully respond to particular operational or geographic demands for investigation, although mission deployment generally reflects the operational size of the mission, and consequent risks, with the exception of one position originally allocated for UNMIT that was subsequently redeployed to UNAMID.

Total resources for missions allocated resident investigator posts in the project: 2011-2012

Mission	*Uniformed personnel*	*Civilian international*	*Civilian local*	*United Nations Volunteers*	*Approved budget*	*Non-expendable property 30 June 2010*
UNAMID[a]	25 987	1 547	3 437	561	1 598 942 200	419 815 000
MONUSCO	22 016	1 245	2 914	673	1 346 584 600	269 925 000
UNMIS	10 690	1 143	3 305	421	958 350 200	305 902 000
UNMIL	11 708	546	1 038	237	560 978 700	157 308 000
UNOCI	9 315	463	751	301	491 774 100	104 909 000
MINUSTAH	9 151	552	1 293	231	732 393 000	150 082 000
UNIFIL	15 000	412	833	0	589 799 200	141 656 000

[a] Position redeployed from UNMIT with 1,639 uniformed personnel, 451 international staff, 981 local staff, 146 United Nations Volunteers with an approved budget of $205,939,400.

20. In addition to the seven missions with resident investigators, the Investigations Division conducts investigations for all other peacekeeping and political missions, at Headquarters and at other duty stations with staff and/or resources funded under the support account.[5]

21. While the allocation of posts for the project was not based on comprehensive baseline statistics or cost-benefit analysis, the mission-based posts generally reflected mission size, implying a caseload correlation. As a result, the project allocated positions to missions at a rate of one to three investigators, with or without support staff, to discharge a function that typically requires a critical mass of four investigators plus support staff. At the centres, posts deployed were less correlated to caseload, with Vienna allocated positions in seniority and number in excess of both management and operational needs.

22. The transfer of some central services from Headquarters to the Vienna centre was an imperative rather than an efficiency consideration in determining pilot-related deployment. Likewise, investigators from centres are necessarily assigned to support investigations at other locations, including other centres and missions with resident investigators, so as to take advantage of surplus capacity and compensate for limited capacity elsewhere.

[5] This includes a variety of locations such as the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, and the regional service centre at the logistics hub at Entebbe, Uganda.

23. Any productivity gains, however, cannot be correlated to the implementation of the project. Initial assessment suggests that productivity in general may be enhanced by deploying resident investigators in three distinct ways:

(a) **Intake**: The intake of new matters for investigation is higher at missions with resident investigators. While intake alone is not a productivity measure, higher intake combined with a favourable ratio of investigation to closure reports seems to suggest improved quality and continuity of intake information and source data, and thus an increase in overall productivity;

(b) **Momentum**: While no quantifiable data exist for measuring the impact of momentum on productivity, logically there would appear to be potential cost and quality advantages for resident versus centre-based investigators, to the extent that the latter might need to travel repeatedly to complete certain tasks or to follow up on others;

(c) **Lifecycle**: Time spent on investigations can affect productivity or quality in cases where tasks may necessarily be rushed in order to accommodate an investigator's travel schedule, with the consequent cost of rework upon a return mission. Resident investigators tend to be better positioned to adjust investigation schedules to accommodate unanticipated operational issues encountered in the field.

24. Although, thus far, investigations have primarily been demand driven, historical trends, risk-based exposures and data now being gathered on resource consumption by category of case and experience levels of assigned investigators will provide better guidance for future resource planning by level, cost and location of deployment. Historical data now available for analysis are limited to caseload intake by volume, source and assigned responsibility for investigation by location.

25. These calculations must, however, be adjusted to reflect new experience afforded by the project: that is, that volume and quality of intake are positively affected by the opportunistic presence of resident investigators to whom such matters may be more easily reported. Significantly lower intake statistics for locations without resident investigators may, therefore, reflect anomalies, not because demand is lacking, but rather because reporting is not facilitated. For the same reason, the deterrent effect of the presence of resident investigators cannot be measured in terms of the volume of reported matters alone — in other words, fewer reported matters may not be a reliable indicator of fewer instances of wrongdoing.

26. Accordingly, risk exposure must also be assessed in determining resource requirements. On a comparative basis, risk can be assessed using several quantifiable measures that also include caseload. The risk is essentially a function of indicators of means and opportunity leading to possible misconduct. The Investigations Division currently uses quantifiable measures, including caseload average, the corruption index of the International Country Risk Guide, data from the misconduct tracking system, the number of uniformed and civilian personnel, and the amount of approved budget and non-expendable property, to assess possible risk.

27. Costs are assessed through budgetary analysis and, beginning in 2011, by the time recording kept by the staff of the Investigations Division. Budgetary analysis primarily relies on historical case data compared to budget appropriations and allocation. Newly introduced time recording, which tracks the cost of investigations more precisely, including by case category, will establish a baseline for resource usage to contribute to the future planning of requirements.

VII. Preparation of comprehensive report

28. OIOS will prepare a comprehensive report on the project in the context of its 2012/13 support account budget, in accordance with the request of the General Assembly in its resolution 63/287, in full consultation with relevant stakeholders, including:

(a) A complete qualitative analysis of the implementation of the three-year pilot project, including lessons learned;

(b) A clear and transparent presentation of the existing (pre-pilot) structure and the pilot project structure and their respective coverage of field missions;

(c) A comprehensive cost-benefit analysis, including of the effectiveness and efficiency of the structure of the pilot project based on accurate assumptions, including an analysis of the long-term trend of investigations at field missions;

(d) A fully justified rationale for all deployments of investigations staff and resources and the ability of OIOS to respond to changing caseload requirements;

(e) Complete and updated information on current staffing, vacancy rates and caseload.

29. OIOS will also consider the recommendations of the audit by the Board of Auditors as contained in its report on financial report and audited financial statements for the 12-month period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 for peacekeeping operations.

VIII. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

30. **The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the implementation of pilot project for the proposed new structure of the Investigations Division are:**

(a) **To take note of the present report;**

(b) **To provide further guidance on the contents of the comprehensive report.**

(*Signed*) Carman L. **Lapointe**
Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services
28 February 2011